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A

NEW DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

MONSIEUR FRANCOIS

AND

JOHN ENGLISH,

ON THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION.

LONDON:

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A NEW DIALOGUE, &c.

F. AH! my good friend, *John Engliſh*, we are now all Citizens of the World; and ſo I am come over to adviſe you what you ſhould do.

E. Advice! *Monſieur François*; Do you pretend to give advice?—And what advice have you brought with you?

F. My advice is, that you ſhould not think ſo highly of your Engliſh Liberty, or ſuppoſe it worth keeping; but that you ſhould give it up, and become as free and as happy as we are.

E. As happy! if you call your preſent ſituation happineſs, what muſt you have been uſed to?

F. Oh *begar*, it was ſo very bad, it could not be worſe.

E. What!—Did you begin to diſlike your *black bread?*

F. No:—*Black bread* is a very good thing; and we are now glad enough to get it. Do but join us, and I think you will ſoon learn to like it.

E. No: that won't do. Black bread would ſoon turn ſour on an Engliſhman's ſtomach. We are uſed to *white bread*, *ſtrong leather ſhoes*, and *good ſhirts*.

F. Leather ſhoes and ſhirts! ah, my friend, that 's Luxury. *Wooden ſhoes* are very comfortable; and as to *ſhirts*, they are no more neceſſary than *breeches*.

E. If the French think ſo, that may be all very well for them: but, if you are ſo eaſily ſatisfied, what could go wrong with you?

F. Perhaps you have heard of the *Baſtile*; and that any great man could, without a why or a wherefore, have any one he pleaſed ſent to a dungeon there for life.

E. Aye by Jove; but if one was to try thoſe tricks here, we ſhould have our *habeas corpus*, and ſwinging damages under *magna charta* for *falſe impriſonment*: and juries would not be very merciful to thoſe kind of gentry.

F. Perhaps you might:—but the Baſtile, Lord! that was nothing; we did not mind that. It was a flea-bite. We were twenty-four millions of people: they could not put us all in at once: and thoſe who were out would dance and ſing as if nothing had happened; or, believe me, they were not Frenchmen.

E. Not

E. Not mind impriſonment in a dungeon for life! if you did not mind that, what the devil did you mind?

F. We all minded what we *all felt*; and nothing elſe.

E. And what did you *all feel* then? what could be worſe than the Baſtile?

F. Many things in France, my dear *John Engliſh*, were a thouſand times worſe. We all felt our taxes; we all felt the manner in which they were impoſed; and the manner in which they were levied.

E. Why, to be ſure, taxes are very bad things; but I am afraid there is no doing well without them.

F. It was not the taxes we minded, but the abuſes of them.—In the firſt place, the *nobility* and the *clergy*, two very numerous and opulent bodies among us, paid *no taxes at all*.

E. No! why, they could beſt afford it; the rich folks pay almoſt all the taxes with us.

F. But not ſo in France; the rich were entirely exempted. But we could have borne that, if that had been all. The worſt was, that the intendants of the provinces and their deputies had the whole direction as to who ſhould pay taxes, and who not.

E. In England, however, it is very different.

F. The intendant could exempt or charge any one as he pleaſed. His relations, his friends, their friends, his deputies, their couſins, and dependents, were favoured or diſcharged from taxes as he pleaſed: and the whole burthen was to fall on the poor, the friendleſs, and thoſe who were leaſt able to bear it.

E. And how long has that curſed work gone on in your country?

F. Some centuries.

E. Some centuries! It would not have laſted in England ſome hours. Why zounds, man, if a lord was to try to throw his taxes upon me, if it would not be enough to let him hear of it at ſeſſions and aſſizes, I would make all Weſtminſter-hall ring with it.—S'blood I would not bear it.

F. But we did; and we bore other things as bad. What do you think of the *Salt-tax?* Every poor family was to pay for ſo much ſalt every year, whether they uſe it or no; and there were from 3000 to 4000 poor men, women and children, ſent to priſon every year (and a large number of them travelled on a miſerable journey to the galleys,) for endeavouring to avoid paying for the ſalt which they could not afford to uſe.

E. Bad!

E. Bad! very bad indeed, *Monſieur François!* I ſhan't like the name of France again for ſome time. But could you get no juſtice?

F. No: for as all our judges purchaſed their places, ſo they carried on the market, and ſold the law to the beſt bidder. The ſuitor who had the longeſt purſe, or the handſomeſt wife, or a friend at court, cared very little for what his antagoniſt could ſay: he was ſure of his cauſe, let the law be what it would.

E. Well now, and there 's the difference betwixt you and us.—If a rich man and a poor man have a cauſe in our courts, and the law pretty equal between them, I'd lay three to one the poor man carried it.

F. Perhaps he might. But again, the *Game-laws!* you have game-laws I think in England.

E. Yes, we have: and I can't ſay I like them. But this I know, that no one ſhall ſhoot on my ground unleſs I pleaſe: and, if they do after notice, I'll ſweat them in damages, I warrant you.

F. Not ſhoot on your ground unleſs you pleaſe! what will prevent them?

E. The law.—And the lord of our manor knows it; and, what 's more, he knows I know it.

F. That was not ſo in France. And, in truth, if it had been only coming on one's

land to kill the game, there would not have been much in it: but it was what they called the *preſervation* of the game that was our *deſtruction*; and, if their game had only been a few innocent partridges, or cowardly hares, or here and there a roguiſh fox, we ſhould not have cared much for that: but the *wolves*, *wild bears*, and herds of *wild deer*, that were quarter'd on us, laid waſte the whole country: and if we attempted to defend ourſelves againſt them, and to ſave part of our crops, our herds and flocks from their ravages, the galleys for life was the certain puniſhment.

E. By Pharaoh, *Monſieur François*, this was Egyptian bondage—more bricks and no ſtraw.

F. Worſe than Egyptian bondage.—Not content with ſending in upon us thoſe ſavage animals, to deſtroy part of our harveſt, they even prevented the ground being properly tilled. There were laws for preſerving the game, which prohibited weeding and hoeing the crops, leſt the young partridges ſhould be diſturbed:—uſing manure that might hurt the flavour of the game:—mowing hay before a certain time, or taking away the ſtubble, leſt we ſhould hurt the covey.

E. Well, thank God! we know nothing of all that.

F. But,

F.. But, Mr. Engliſh, you know what the feudal law is, perhaps.

E. I have heard ſomething of it.—England ſuffered by the abuſes of it formerly: but they were ſet right by act of Parliament a great many years ago; and ſent to their proper ſettlement, with their old father, the devil.

F. So much the better. In France they continued in full vigour, quite to the time of the Revolution: and, Mr. Engliſh, if you could hear me for two or three days together on the ſubject, I could give you ſuch a hiſtory of the oppreſſion of the Lords of the ſeigniories within my own little neighbourhood, and enumerate ſuch acts of tyranny, as would make your heart bleed to hear them.

E. Much obliged to you, *Monſieur François:* but I don't like to have my heart bleed. I feel a little too much of that, at what you have ſaid already.—Under ſuch oppreſſion, I do not wonder you were deſirous of a Revolution. I only wiſh you had obtained it with leſs *blood* and *cruelty*, and ſettled your Government a little better. But how are you going on?

F. We are not much afraid of foreign enemies; nor have we any thing to apprehend except *anarchy*, *confuſion*, and *famine*.

E. Three companions bad enough.

F. No!

F. No! The two firſt we are uſed to; but the laſt is rather an unpleaſant viſitor. It is not that the country has loſt its fertility; but, when every one is to be either a ſoldier or a ſtateſman, none are left to till the ground or get in the harveſt

E. That 's a bad buſineſs, and not to be cured by all your fine ſpeeches: for you know there 's no preaching to the ſtomach, as it has no ears.

F. To be ſure, the *Manufacturers*, *Tradeſmen*, and *Farmers*, have been dreadful ſufferers; and that muſt be expected at ſuch a time. But then the glorious Equality of our Nation! That 's the thing. Think, Mr. Engliſh, what it is to have twenty-four millions of people, and all *exactly equal.*

E. But how will you keep them *exactly equal?* Muſt not induſtry and œconomy always acquire wealth? and ought not a father to have the right of leaving to his children what he has earned by his induſtry?

F. We have a remedy, however, for that; a remedy which will bring all French Citizens to govern in their turns, ſooner or later, and for a ſhorter or longer period.

E. What can that be?

F. Equality, my friend, cannot be preſerved but by cutting down all that riſe above others.

others.—Thoſe, to whom France owed its Liberty, were great men, and had great merit: but their exiſtence was not to be put into competition with their country, or with our ſyſtem of Equality. They have therefore all been either *maſſacred* or *baniſhed.*

E. I am very ſorry for it.

F. It could not be helped. There is no maintaining a complete ſyſtem of Equality without it. Some of their ſucceſſors have undergone, and others are now undergoing, the ſame fate; and the third ſet, who are juſt come into power, muſt ſoon, in the ſame manner, make room for another *crop:* And ſo we ſhall all *live free, and die,* in our turns.

E. A very enviable ſituation truly!—But what is all this to *Engliſhmen,* whoſe *Birthright* is *Liberty?*——The abuſes that you complain of, do not exiſt in England; they have been long ago corrected, by the virtue and bravery of our anceſtors; who have tranſmitted to us a *free Conſtitution,* which every true-hearted Briton would die ſooner than part with.

F. A Conſtitution! I laugh at your Conſtitution. What! will you pretend to compare England with France in that reſpect?

E. Read your own dreadful accounts of the *torrents of blood* which have ſtained the *French Revo-*

Revolution; and then turn to the Engl'ſh Hiſtory, and ſee *Magna Charta* and the *Habeas Corpus* act obtained, *feudal tyranny* annihilated, and our *glorious Revolution atchieved, without one drop of blood*, without interruption to the ordinary courſe of juſtice, and without violation even of the forms of the Conſtitution.

F. But, Mr. Engliſh, conſider the natural Rights of Man.

E. When we enter into ſociety, we exchange our natural rights for civil rights. The firſt are the rights of a ſavage, to prey upon the weak and helpleſs; the latter are the rights of ſociety, uniting us for our general happineſs, and mutual aſſiſtance, and protection.

F. But why not have both?

E. Becauſe they are incompatible. *Your Equality* leads to nothing but *plunder*, *confuſion*, and *maſſacre:* the reſult of which, unleſs your wild notions of Liberty are corrected, will be a relapſe into ſlavery, as the leſſer evil.

F. But why Kings? Why ſhould mankind have Kings?

E. Becauſe experience has taught that under them *Peace*, *Order*, and *Liberty*, may be enjoyed in the greateſt perfection. We muſt take man as he is; and frame our governments accordingly. Ambitious and aſpiring

ſpirits

ſpirits there will be in all communities of men; and time and circumſtances will give them power, which, if not checked, will be dangerous to the community, and oppreſſive to individuals. Your correction for this evil is a bloody one, and it will not anſwer long: whereas the degree of power which we have placed in the King's hands is at the ſame time a check to the ambition of the great, and a protection to the poor.

F. Ah, Mr. Engliſh, don't be ſeduced by your preſent peace and proſperity; why will you perſuade yourſelf that you are free and happy, or truſt to appearances, however favourable?

E. Why now to reaſon about it, *Monſieur François*; would you ſeriouſly inſiſt on my taking phyſic, becauſe you have been ſick? Or becauſe *you* have the *French diſorder*, is it neceſſary that *I* ſhould undergo a *ſalivation*?

F. It might be very good for you, by way of prevention.

E. And then perhaps my hiſtory might be the ſame as the man's who was well—took phyſic to be better—and died.

F. Ah, my good friend, be aſſured that the French Nation intereſts herſelf in your following her in this, as in other faſhions; and that ſhe earneſtly wiſhes that England

was at this moment *exactly in the ſame ſituation as France.*

E. In truth, I believe ſhe does; and ſo do all the natural enemies of Great Britain.—Envy, *Monſieur François*, Envy will be buſy.—What! when we enjoy all the trade and commerce of the world: in the full tide of ſucceſs; our liberties ſecured; our manufacturers employed; our reſources increaſing; ſhall we renounce all the bleſſings of *peace, order, liberty*, and *national proſperity* (ſuch as neither the annals of hiſtory, nor the circuit of the globe, can equal), for—— what? For *anarchy, confuſion*, and *wretchedneſs*. GOD FORBID, is the voice of

AN ENGLISHMAN.

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